

REMARKS

Claims 1-6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14-19, and 21 are now pending in the present Application, Claims 1, 9, 12, 15, and 19 having been amended and Claims 13 and 20 being cancelled. The claims set forth above include markings to show changes made by way of the present amendment, insertions appear underlined (e.g., insertions) while deletions appear as strikethrough text or brackets (e.g., deletions or [[deletions]]).

In response to the Office Action mailed December 13, 2006, the Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider the above-captioned application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following comments.

Amendment To Specification

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's assistance in addressing the erroneous amendments to the Specification set forth in the Response to the March 21, 2006 Office Action, filed September 21, 2006. Set forth above are the same amendments previously submitted, however, with the paragraphs properly identified as paragraphs [0060] and [0074]. Thus, Applicant submits that the amendments to the Specification are now proper.

Acknowledgement of Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has indicated that Claims 1-6 and 8 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the Examiner's rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. The Examiner also indicated that Claims 12, 13, 19 and 20 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

In response, the Applicant has amended Claim 1 to make this claim more easily readable, as discussed in greater detail below. The Applicant has also amended Claims 12 and 19 into independent form. Finally, instead of amending Claims 13 and 20 into independent form, Applicant has amended Claims 9 and 15 to include the recitations of Claims 13 and 20, respectively.

Thus, the Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 1-6, 8, 9, 12, 15, and 19 are now in condition for allowance.

Claims 1-6 and 8 are not indefinite under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

Claims 1-6 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicant regards as the invention. Specifically, the Examiner stated that it is unclear to define the mating surfaces as

“positioned within a perimeter of the driven pulley.” The Applicant respectfully traverses the present rejection.

However, in order to expedite prosecution of the present Application, the Applicant has amended Claim 1, lines 8-9 solely to make the claims more easily readable and not to narrow or affect the scope of the claims. In particular, Applicant has amended Claim 1 as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 1-6 and 8 meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112 and respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of Claims 1-6 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 112.

Applicant submits that the present amendment to Claim 1 does not present an abandonment of any range of equivalents. Thus, all of the equivalents of the original recitations of Claim 1 are also equivalents of the present recitations of Claim 1.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(e) and 103(a)

Claims 9, 11 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,715,379 to Miguchi et al. Claims 15-18 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,269,899 to Izumi in view of Miguchi et al. Applicant respectfully traverses the present rejections.

However, in order to expedite prosecution of the present Application, Claims 9 and 15 have been amended, as discussed above, to include the recitations of Claims 13 and 20, which the Examiner indicated as allowable if rewritten into independent form. Applicant expressly reserves the right to further prosecute the original versions of Claims 9, 11, 14, 16-18 and 21 through continuation practice.

The Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 11, 14, 16-18, and 21 are allowable not only because they depend from one of Claims 9 and 15, but also for their own merit. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(e) and 103(a).

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the rejections set forth in the outstanding Office Action are inapplicable to the present claims. Accordingly, early issuance of a Notice of Allowance is most earnestly solicited.

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The undersigned has made a good faith effort to respond to all of the rejections in the case and to place the claims in condition for immediate allowance. Nevertheless, if any undeveloped issues remain or if any issues require clarification, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call Applicant's attorney in order to resolve such issue promptly.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

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